

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 AID-20 SAM-01 PC-10 DRC-01 /137 W

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R 010910Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHCC 8070

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUALA LUMPUR 4749

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PINR MY

SUBJ: TUNKU RITHAUDDEEN GIVEN FOREIGN AFFAIRS ASSIGNMENT

REF: FBIS BANGKOK 230924Z SEP 74

1. ON SEPT 22, PRIME MINISTER RAZAK NAMED TUNKU AHMAD RITHAUDDEEN AL-HAJ BIN TUNKU ISMAIL (SURNAME: RITHAUDDEEN) AS MINISTER OF SPECIAL FUNCTIONS FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS. CONCURRENTLY MINISTER OF INFORMATION, RITHAUDDEEN HAS IN FACT ASSISTED RAZAK, ALSO FOREIGN MINISTER, ON SELECTED FOREIGN RELATIONS PROJECTS SINCE CABINET REALIGNMENT IN AUGUST 1973, BUT NEW DESIGNATION GIVES HIM AUTHORITY OVER FOREIGN MINISTRY (MFA) MANAGEMENT. MFA OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD EMBOFFS THAT RITHAUDDEEN WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS AND DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS. HENCEFORTH ONLY MAJOR POLICY MATTERS WILL BE REFERRED TO RAZAK AND RITHAUDDEEN WILL ASSUME PUBLIC FUNCTIONS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, INCLUDING RECEIVING NEW CHIEFS OF MISSION.

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2. RITHAUDDEEN, BORN IN KELANTAN IN 1931, ASSUMED INFORMATION

PORTFOLIO IN JANUARY 1973 IN ADDITION TO DESIGNATION AS SPECIAL FUNCTIONS MINISTER IN PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT. FROM 1970 TO 1973, HE SERVED AS DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE, A JOB WHICH HE HANDLED COMPETENTLY, EARNING REPUTATION AS QUIET, STEADY BUT NOT BRILLIANT PERFORMER. A LEADER OF UNITED MALAYS NATIONAL ORGANIZATION (UMNO) IN KELANTAN, RITHAUDDEEN IS WELL-CONNECTED POLITICALLY AND HAS TIES WITH KELANTAN ROYAL FAMILY. HE IS CONGENIAL, APPROACHABLE AND IS NOT KNOWN TO HAVE ANY PARTICULAR BIASES.

3. RITHAUDDEEN'S PERFORMANCE IN FOREIGN RELATIONS FIELD HAS NOT BEEN NOTEWORTHY, BUT HE HAS ATTENDED NON-ALIGNED NATIONS CONFERENCE AND ACCOMPANIED RAZAK TO LAHORE ISLAMIC SUMMIT IN FEB. 1974. HE ALSO SERVED ON GOM DELEGATIONS TO ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE HERE IN JUNE AND CHAIRED SESSIONS OF POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
UNDERHILL

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